

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of providing a user with access to the content of an Internet portal, using the public switched telephone network (PSTN) and a modemless connection,
5 comprising the steps of:
 - receiving, at an interactive voice response (IVR) system, a telephone call from the user, dialed with a calling card number and incoming through the PSTN;
 - recognizing IVR input from the user to select
10 between a voice call and Internet portal access;
 - for a voice call, completing the telephone call to a destination telephone number;
 - for Internet portal access, performing the following steps: receiving IVR input from the user representing a
15 password; providing the user with a preference selection menu; providing the user with a content selection menu; receiving IVR input from the user representing Internet content selection; communicating the content selection to an Internet server; translating the Internet content from
20 text format to audio data; and
 - transmitting the audio data to the user via the PSTN.

2. A method of providing a user with access to the content of an Internet portal, using the public switched telephone network (PSTN) and a modemless connection, comprising the steps of:

- 5 receiving, at an interactive voice response (IVR) system, a telephone call from the user, dialed with a calling card number and incoming through the PSTN;
- 10 recognizing IVR input from the user to select between a voice call and Internet portal access;
- 15 for a voice call, completing the telephone call to a destination telephone number;
- for Internet portal access, performing the following steps: receiving IVR input from the user representing a password; communicating content instructions to an Internet server; translating the Internet content from text format to audio data; and
- transmitting the audio data to the user via the PSTN.

20 3. The method of Claim 2, wherein the receiving step is performed with a wire line call from the user.

4. The method of Claim 2, wherein the receiving step is performed with a wireless call from the user.

25 5. The method of Claim 2, wherein the text format is XML format.

30 6. The method of Claim 2, wherein the IVR input is telephone keypad input.

7. The method of Claim 2, wherein the IVR input is voice input.

5 8. The method of Claim 2, wherein for Internet portal access, the step of receiving IVR input is followed by the steps of providing an IVR menu of Internet content selections and of receiving IVR input representing an Internet content selection.

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9. The method of Claim 2, wherein the Internet content is email messages.

15 10. The method of Claim 2, further comprising the steps of presenting the user with an option to change portal preferences and of receiving IVR input representing one or more preference settings.

11. A system for accessing the content of an Internet portal database served by a portal server, using the public switched telephone network and a modemless connection, comprising:

5 a text-to-speech translator for receiving Internet content from the Internet portal database and for translating text representing the Internet content to audio data; and

10 a interactive voice response (IVR) system operable to receive an incoming calling card call via the public switched telephone network (PSTN), to recognize whether the call is to be completed as a telephone call or for access to the Internet content, and to instruct the portal server to retrieve the Internet content and
15 deliver the Internet content to the text-to-speech translator.

12. The system of Claim 11, wherein the IVR system is operable to receive the calling card call from a wire
20 line telephone.

13. The system of Claim 11, wherein the IVR system is operable to receive the calling card call from a wireless telephone.

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14. The system of Claim 11, wherein the text-to-speech translator translates text in XML format to audio data.

15. The system of Claim 11, wherein the IVR system is further operable to provide menu selections representing Internet content selections.

5 16. The system of Claim 11, wherein the IVR system is further operable to receive IVR input representing Internet content selections.

10 17. The system of Claim 11, wherein the IVR system is further operable to receive IVR input representing portal preferences and to communicate data representing the preferences to the portal server.

15 18. The system of Claim 11, wherein the IVR input is telephone key input.

19. The system of Claim 11, wherein the IVR input is voice input.

20. A method of providing a user with access to an Internet portal, comprising the steps of:

 providing the user with access to the portal via the Internet;

5 providing the user with access to the same portal content via a calling card number placed on the public switched telephone network (PSTN);

 providing means for receiving user input representing preference selections via the Internet; and

10 providing means for receiving user input representing preference selections via a calling card call on the PSTN.